

Canton School Committee
Open Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2022

A. Call to Order: Chair Merenda asked for a motion to convene the December 1, 2022 Open Session of the School Committee at 6:01 pm. Kendall O'Halloran made the motion and Laura Arboleda seconded. Vote was unanimous and recorded as 4-0.

Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea (left meeting at 6:45 pm)
Maureen Moran	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea

Attendees:

Kristian Merenda
Kendall O'Halloran
Laura Arboleda
Maureen Moran
Superintendent Derek Folan
Stephen Marshall, Director of Finance and Operations
Emma Cummings, Student Representative
Joanne Campbell, Recording Secretary

Absent:

Nichola Gallagher

Guests:

Ms. Debra Rooney
Ms. Sara Donovan, Elementary STEM Coordinator Pr-K -5
Kelsey Cummings, GMS Math Coordinator
Don Devoid, CHS Math Department Chair

B. Superintendent's Report Superintendent Folan presented District progress, highlights, and accolades.

Highlights:

Romeo & Juliet: The CHS drama club presented a wonderful performance of Romeo & Juliet. Kudos to Director Katie Bobst and all of the students, staff and families involved.

CHS Student Forum: School Committee Members, joined by Superintendent Derek Folan and Principal Jeff Sperling, enjoyed the opportunity to meet and talk with students at the CHS student forum on Friday, Nov. 18.

Thanksgiving Day Win: Congratulations to the Canton Bulldog football team for an impressive 28-14 win over the Stoughton Black Knights.

Indicators of Excellence:

GMS Math Buddies: The new Math Buddies tutoring program was launched at GMS this past week. The program pairs volunteers from the upper grades with students in lower grade levels who can benefit from some one-on-one time practicing key math skills.

Luce 5th Grade Author Visits: Thank you to Ms. Wade and Ms. Fabbiano's 5th grade class for introducing students in the younger grades to non-fiction text features by sharing their published books.

Senior Districts: Congratulations to the following students who were accepted to senior districts. They will participate in the Senior District festival on January 6-7.

Lianna Camille-Viola	Leah Condon-Soprano	Atlas Curran Barker-Tenor
Sonia Le-Bass	Derek Mar-Violin	Alejadra Salazar-Alto
Abigail Silvasy-Soprano	Laura Walsh-Soprano	Anthony Wang-Trumpet

Additionally the following students scored high enough to be recommended to audition for All States:

Lianna Camille-Viola	Derek Mar-Violin	Abigail Silvasy-Soprano
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CHS Band Visits Cornerstone: The Bulldog Band took a trip to Cornerstone on November 22 to spread some holiday cheer.

Updates:

Director of Student Services Search Update: We would like to thank the many stakeholders on the Interview Committee for the Student Services Director position. We will be poised to announce a recommendation for a Finalist Day by tomorrow, Friday, December 2.

COVID Home Test Distribution: Thank you to Nurse Leader Lauren Pushard and the CPS Nursing team for coordinating the distribution of over 1,000 COVID Home Test kits (900 students and 250 staff) on Tuesday, November 22.

Title 1 Night: On Tuesday, November 29, we held a Title 1 Information Night for parents of students who are receiving reading tutoring in grades 1-5. Information was shared about Title 1 services and resources were distributed to support learning at home.

Important Dates and Events

Dec. 9	Early Release, PreK-12 PD
Dec. 9	Hansen Presents Beauty and the Beast Jr., 7:00 pm, CHS Auditorium https://www.showtix4u.com/event-details/69060
Dec. 10	Hansen Presents Beauty and the Beast Jr., 3:00 pm, CHS Auditorium

	https://www.showtix4u.com/event-details/69060
Dec. 15	School Committee, CHS DLL, 6:00 pm
Dec. 16	CHS Winter Concert - All Ensembles, CHS Auditorium, 7:00 pm
Dec. 20	CHS Drama Club One Act Plays, CHS Auditorium, 7:00 pm
Dec. 22	World Language Honor Society, 6:00 pm, CHS Auditorium
Dec. 23	Early Release, Winter Break
Dec. 26 - Dec. 30	No School, Winter Break
Jan. 2, 2023	No School, New Year's Day Observance

C. (20 min.) Teaching and Learning Report: Ms. Rooney reviewed benchmark assessments (STAR for K-5) and the GMS and CHS benchmarks for ELA and Math.

1. **K-5:** This fall, (screening window for grades 1-5 was September 12-23) K-5 students were assessed using the Renaissance STAR Benchmark Assessment. Educators were able to analyze student performance in two ways:
 - a. how students performed against peers nationally and how students performed against the standards expectations in Massachusetts. Results show that performance in CPS has been consistent with prior years.
 - b. In grades 3-5, STAR data was used to predict MCAS performance. Via the STAR 360 universal screener, teachers were able to identify students who need additional support in math and reading to meet grade level expectations. These students are provided additional small group instruction during the school day.

2. GMS and CHS Fall Benchmarks:

The Common Lit Reading Assessment Series includes a Pre-Assessment, Mid-Year Assessment and End of Year Assessment that is aligned to Common Core State Standards. These assessments give teachers helpful information on how students are performing on key skills at their grade level and where they might need further support. Each teacher is able to pull up their own classroom. They are able to see patterns that allow them to target learning indicators and design better, more inclusive instruction. The results show both strengths for Canton students and present areas for further growth. Recognizing the areas of growth allows our teachers to target learning indicators.

Ms. Ashley, ELA Dept Head, is working with teachers at GMS and CHS to plan future lessons and units based on the findings of CommonLit data.

3. The IXL Diagnostic:

Given to students in grades 6-10 and some 11th and 12th graders for math, the IXL Diagnostic assessment provides students with a performance level score in eight domains. Students are then able to use IXL to practice skills in areas that need improvement. Teachers are able to use IXL to support learning on standards currently taught in their curriculum as well.

Results: a significantly higher number of students are achieving in the above or on grade level categories. At GMS, students used their IXL data to set goals for improvement. Teachers have students lists with high occurring trouble spots for additional instruction and remediation, and can use IXL to practice.

1. Consistent with MCAS and Reveal, IXL data suggests opportunities for growth in domains of Numbers Sense, Algebraic operations, and Measurement and Data.
2. At GMS, students used their IXL data to set goals for improvement.
3. Teachers have students lists with high occurring trouble spots for additional instruction and remediation, and can use IXL to practice.
4. Consistent with MCAS and Reveal, IXL data suggests opportunities for growth in domains of Numbers Sense, Algebraic operations, and Measurement and Data.

D. New Business:

1. **Q1 Financial Report:** Mr. Marshall presented the Q1 Report (through 9/30/22) including Operating Budget projections, Special Education Expense analysis, a summary of FY23 School Revolving Accounts as of 9/30/22 and FY23 year-to date Budget Report through September 30, 2022 by fund, location and category. He noted 82% of the budget is consumed by salaries; additionally, out-of-district tuitions, transportation and utilities equal 13%. Together, these line items make up a total of 95% of the budget. Mr. Marshall expressed concern over a probable increase of 14% in FY24 for out of district tuitions and 20-30% increase in transportation. However, due to Circuit Breaker and Special Education Reserve account balances, he believes there will be sufficient funds available to cover these expenditures in FY23 and FY24. Mr. Marshall also believes that Circuit Breaker and Federal Grants will continue. Nevertheless, the Special Education Expense Analysis does include the potential for the 14% increase.
Ms. Moran asked why there was such a substantial raise in Special Education budgets. Mr. Marshall noted that these numbers originated from DESE, and Superintendent Folan added that he would determine how DESE arrived at a 14% increase.
Mr. Marshall's report included a breakdown by school that allows comparative school

spending.

Hearing no further questions, Chair Merenda called for a motion to approve the Q1 Financial Report as presented. Motion was made by Kendall O'Halloran and seconded by Laura Arboleda. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote of approval and recorded as follows:

Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea

2. **Approval of Donations and Grants:** Mr. Marshall presented and explained Q1 donations and grants to the School Committee. With no questions or concerns from Committee members, Chair Merenda called for a motion to approve FY23 1st Quarter Grants and Donations as presented. Kendall O'Halloran made the motion and Laura Arboleda seconded. The vote was unanimous and recorded as 4-0:

Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea

3. **(60 min.) Math Implementation Update:** Ms. Rooney and Math Department coordinators shared a Reveal math implementation update including GMS and CHS pathways. Ms. Rooney presented an overview of Reveal Math including the components of the program as well as a recap of all the training provided to date. Reveal Math offers strong differentiation in the program and provides more access to students who want to progress through multiple pathways and courses. There are three benchmarks per year and one common assessment. Each lesson begins with a readiness diagnostic. Once the lesson is completed, there is a formative assessment where teachers are able to gauge whether students understood the concept and offer either differentiation or extensions. These gauges also help teachers negotiate instructions for each lesson to allow more successful comprehension.

- Ms. Sara Donovan, Elementary STEM Coordinator PreK-5, illustrated the benefits and challenges of the Reveal Math program. She is pleased with the number routines, number talks, and the intentional STEM connections in every lesson, and high quality resources in both print and digital formats. She cited challenges as too many resources; the timing of the lessons but acknowledged that with experience using the program, collaboration with fellow teachers, and reflection (what's working and what isn't), she expects this challenge to dissipate. She also finds the vocabulary to be confusing and "too wordy." Next steps for Ms. Donovan, with the help of a newly hired Math consultant, will include continued Math focus

on early release days and professional development for grade level teams at each school.

- Ms. Kelsey Cummings, GMS Math Department Advisor, finds Reveal Math to be rigorous and is appreciative of the real life connections offered by Reveal Math, especially its connections to IXL, and the resources, especially workbooks that offer both printables and online options. Challenges include the standards the program raises for all and pacing of the program as it relates to the GMS schedule. Middle school early release days will also be dedicated to Reveal in collaboration with the GMS Instructional Coach.

Student surveys show that Reveal is well-liked, but Ms. Cummings is working on blind surveys to see if more honest answers are revealed. She is also working on developing Metacognition so all students set goals for themselves and take more responsibility for their own improvement. Wanting to add enrichment and connections, Ms. Cummings also introduced a new twice weekly peer tutoring program called “Math Buddies” where 8th grade “scholars” tutor 7th graders and 7th grader “scholars” tutor 6th graders during X Block.

Mr. Don Devoid, CHS Math Department Advisor, spoke highly of the Reveal pretests as an effective, formative assessment tool, the new books provided by Reveal Math, and the IXL Diagnostics and practice for students. He is particularly impressed with the integrated pathway the program offers noting that 70% of those in accelerated classes came from CP classes. He finds the program’s pacing and organization of lessons challenging as they are not organized in a way that works with CHS’s schedule, but expects to work on adjusting within courses. Mr. Devoid was pleased to announce that because this program includes integrated pathways that offer students natural progression, it will allow the math department to offer AP Precalculus beginning Fall 2023.

Ms. Emma Cummings, Student Representative to the School Committee, asked Mr. Devoid to tie IXL to the lessons in an effort to make better connections.

Ms. Moran asked when the School Committee might see an update on MCAS numbers as an assessment of the new math program. Ms. Rooney stated that the District will be benchmarking in January 2023. Ms. Rooney also reported that next steps for Reveal Math include adding math support and tutors. Professional learning will continue throughout the year to allow teachers to continue to learn the program and make adjustments

4. **District Goal Update:** Superintendent Folan reported on Priority #2 goals, specifically, what the District has implemented with systematic, consistent and proactive approaches to address student behavioral needs, promote respectful and responsible relationships, and enhance a culture of student accountability:

□ **Establish a standing SEL (Social-Emotional Learning) Committee to identify a systemic SEL approach and a consistent curriculum.**

Meghan Byrne, Interim Director of Student Services, Adam Hughes, Director of Wellness, and Meredith Chamberland, Director of Counseling met to identify objectives and build a timeline for CPS to identify an SEL curriculum Pre K -12. The committee is composed of members from each building to ensure a broad representation of professional roles. The committee met twice in October to review and evaluate 10 SEL programs with regard to evidence-based practices, anticipated student outcomes, implementation, professional development needs, and scope and sequence of learning objectives. The committee recommended a second, more thorough review of *Character Strong*, *Second Step*, and *Wayfinder* as potential PreK-12 curriculum proposals. Additionally, the committee identified *Social Thinking* and *Calm Classroom* as supplemental programs that may benefit varied student populations within the district. They will continue to consider these resources as part of the larger proposal.

The SEL Committee met in November to review proposals, sample lesson plans, and research on student outcomes and presented findings to the District Cabinet. Committee members and District leadership reviewed the presentation materials and provided feedback to recommend the top two choices by November 23, 2022. After review of all the feedback, Ms. Byrne, Mr. Hughes, and Dr. Chamberland will meet in early December to outline next steps for reference checks with other districts; develop an outline; and schedule a review of the top two programs with feedback from additional stakeholders.

□ **Maintain a standing Handbook Review Committee to assess yearly practice and policy alignment.**

The Elementary Schools meet on a regular basis with Assistant Superintendent Sarah Shannon to review school and handbook matters in relation to updated laws, such as 37H 3/4, and current scenarios. Copies of handbooks have been made available to committee members to add comments, updates and areas for improvement for review with School Councils. GMS and CHS are working collaboratively around handbooks, most recently focusing on the Chapter 37H 3/4 legal update, current practices and alignment between schools.

It was suggested that handbooks be updated by the end of the school year rather than over the summer. Goal-setting would be a goal for summer work. Chair Merenda commented on striving for consistency across schools and suggested there be one, coherent elementary handbook across the three elementary buildings.

5. **Superintendent Professional Improvement Goals Update:** Superintendent Folan provided an update on the following professional improvement goals:

a. **Steps to increase Math MCAS scores:**

Mr. Folan described the implementation of the new Math curriculum, Reveal Math, including analysis of learning profiles, demographics, previous MCAS results, and standards over time. He described the professional development, learning and adaptation around Reveal Math including Student Focus areas and data meetings with specialists, educators, administration, department and heads as they prepared for the step up to STAG. As the semester progressed, educators gauged intervention needs, benchmark assessments, and analyzed student needs. Professional development continued with the help of a math consultant who is visiting all schools. Beginning in 2023, there will be development and implementation of focused Tutoring opportunities.

■ **During the 2022-23 School Year, Canton Public Schools will increase the percentage of student scoring in the MCAS Math Meeting or Exceeding achievement range by 5 percent. (2022 54.5% vs. 2019 65%)**

Cycles of improvement are proceeding with collaborators. Dashboards have been built to help analyze performance on concepts, standards, domains and indicators. These tools may help teachers and specialists quickly identify aspects of the curricula that are working well and those that need additional focus.

A quarterly check of the K-12 Math curriculum implementation process and report on learning and impact on students, staff, and families was presented to the School Committee on Thursday, December 1st, 2022. A second presentation is expected in the Spring 2023.

Data is available in all CPS buildings. Grade level and student generated Focus Areas have been assembled so staff can quickly ascertain areas of success as well as areas that may require further instruction. After each screening (three times per year), focus areas can expand to allow staff to authenticate the effectiveness of interventions.

It is important that students understand basic principles of math. The Data Analytics Manager is monitoring student performance screening data regularly and there are routine data meetings with administration, specialists, department heads and educators. Screening and benchmark data also help CPS staff define intervention methods or materials necessary to support students.

In an effort to engage families and students, webinars were held on November 2nd for elementary schools and November 15th for GMS. Both events were

well-attended. CHS will be scheduling its Math Night shortly. Superintendent Folan encouraged parents to reach out to school principals, advisors, or teachers for any help if they see their child struggling with assignments.

E. Public Comment: There were no public comments, virtual or in-person.

F. Director of Finance and Operations Report: Mr. Marshall provided an update on transportation. The district continues to see progress and improvement with both First Student and Vanpool communication, routes, and on-time schedules. He is exploring other companies for more options in anticipation of the 2023-24 school year. Mr. Marshall also noted that the Transportation Coordinator for the District begins the work day at 8am. This is causing some communication delays on days when bus companies have personnel issues. Mr. Marshall will explore alternatives. He encouraged any parent or caretaker who is experiencing any transportation concerns to connect with CPS administration to resolve issues. Although there are some “bugs” to work out, Mr. Marshall reported that the transportation app is working well. He did recognize some users are experiencing some lagging delays in notification deliveries. First Student is addressing these and working on an upgrade of the app.

Mr. Marshall announced that the new school bus delivery will be delayed until February. Finally, he expects the Transportation Consultant to start work next week (week of December 5th). This person will begin with data gathering and review. Mr. Marshall anticipates the consultant will bring forward his recommendations by early March 2023.

G. Consent Agenda:

1. Regular Session Minutes: November 17, 2022
2. Executive Session Minutes: November 16, 2022
3. Warrants: December 2, 2022

Hearing no requests for removal of any of the items from the Consent Agenda for further discussion, Chair Merenda called for a motion to accept the Consent Agenda as written. Laura Arboleda made the motion and Maureen Moran seconded. Vote was unanimous and recorded as 3-0.,

Kristian Merenda	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea

H. Update of Sub-Committee, Task Force and Liaison Posts:

Emma Cummings-no updates
Stephen Marshall-no further updates
Maureen Moran-no updates
Superintendent Folan:

1. The next MSBA School Building Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 7th at 6pm. The agenda will include discussion of the Owner’s Project

Manager (OPM) Selection. There will also be conversation around community input per MSBA requirements, specifically in regard to the cost of the building and debt exclusion.

2. Mr. Folan also noted that he recently attended a Canton Departmental meeting at the invitation of Fire Chief, Charlie Doody. He will continue to attend these meetings to get a full understanding of the District and develop a district network.

Kristian Merenda-no updates

Laura Arboleda-no updates.

I. Other Business: None

J. Future Business: The next Open Session meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 15, 2022, @ 6:00 pm.

E. Adjournment: Chair Merenda called for a motion to adjourn the Thursday, December 1, 2022 Open Session School Committee meeting at 8:35 pm. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Maureen Moran seconded. The vote was unanimous and recorded as 3-0:

Kristian Merenda	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea
Maureen Moran	yea

Materials viewed/reviewed at the meeting:

T & L Update - Benchmark Assessments Fall 2022

Superintendent's Report - 12/1/2022

Fy 23 Q1 Financial Report

FY23 Q1 Grants & Donations

Math Department Update

District Goals Update - 12/1/2022

Superintendent Goals Update - 12/1/2022